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KOREAN CONFRONTATION CONTINUES UNRESOLVED

The talks between North Korean and US representatives at Panmunjom appear to have made no progress toward resolving the confrontation over the Pueblo incident.

Pyongyang is clearly intent on prolonging tensions by dragging out negotiations. North Korean propaganda has concentrated on publicizing "confessions" by the Pueblo's crew. A lengthening parade of officers and crewmen al-

legedly have expressed guilt and "apologized" for the ship's intrusion into North Korean waters.

The South Korean [REDACTED] initial dissatisfaction over US handling of the Pueblo incident soon broadened [REDACTED] into widespread public resentment. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] The press complained that the Panmun-jom talks undermined South Korean sovereignty and elevated the status of the North Korean regime. Some politicians urged diplomatic pressure to stop the "secret" talks and demanded unilateral retaliatory action against the Communist North. The National Assembly unanimously passed a resolution protesting US - North Korean talks without South Korean participation.

Students have demonstrated at the US Embassy in Seoul, in Pusan, and near the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). [REDACTED]

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Thus, after officially protesting on 5 February, the government moved to damp down public indignation.

A high-level spokesman assured press representatives on 6 February that President Pak has in fact been fully informed on the talks and that the assassination attempt against him had been discussed at one meeting. The next day while speaking to the National Assembly, the foreign minister conceded that discussion of the Pueblo crewmen's release might be given priority "from a humanitarian point of view." This change in official position has been reflected in the shift of the Seoul press to a more moderate stance.

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Soviet military reaction to the Korean crisis is continuing on a low level. As US naval forces moved into the Sea of Japan, they were shadowed by two Soviet destroyers and an intelligence collection ship.

[REDACTED] A task force of five more Soviet destroyers was deployed in the Sea of Japan early this week in an after-the-fact show of force. Soviet naval aircraft have conducted several reconnaissance missions--including overflights--against the US task force.

Soviet propaganda is playing the Pueblo incident in low key and Soviet officials have for the most part been maintaining that the Pueblo intruded into territorial waters. Moscow continues to emphasize that direct US - North Korean meetings offer the best chance for resolving the issue. The most authoritative public statement on the crisis, a Pravda "Observer" article on 4 February, concluded by advising the US that if it really desired a solution it should respect North Korea's sovereignty and stop "threatening" the Koreans.

Since China's official statement of support on 28 January, Peking propaganda has given only sparse and low-level coverage to the Pueblo incident. [REDACTED]

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